

Memorandum of Understanding
of the
Southern and Central Sierra Noxious Weed Alliance
MARIPOSA, MADERA, AND FRESNO COUNTIES
California

This memorandum of understanding is made and entered into by the parties listed in section III.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum of understanding, to include all areas within Mariposa, Madera, and Fresno counties, is to promote and formalize cooperative relationships necessary for effective management, coordination, and implementation of noxious weed programs among the undersigned parties. For the purposes of this MOU, noxious weeds are invasive nonnative plants.

II. GOALS

Whereas, all parties have a mutual interest in promoting education, detection, monitoring, prevention, information exchange, and control; and share the following goals:

1. EDUCATION: increasing public awareness and involvement in Weed Alliance activities.
2. INVENTORY, DETECTION, MONITORING, AND PREVENTION: preventing new weed infestations, detecting existing infestations and preventing their spread
3. INFORMATION EXCHANGE: sharing of technical information regarding control methods, locations, new infestations, successful and unsuccessful projects amongst parties and with other Regional and local Weed Management Areas.
4. CONTROL: Combining resources to bring about effective management and eradication of designated weeds
5. COOPERATION: Facilitate development of Cooperative Agreements for local Weed Management Areas which will include opportunities for shared funding sources, resources, personnel, equipment, etc.

III. NOW THEREFORE IN CONSIDERATION OF THE ABOVE PREMISES, THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES MUTUALLY AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

Each party agrees to contribute the following to further the purpose of the MOU:

California Department of Food & Agriculture

1. Provide technical and resource support toward the detection and eradication of "A"- rated noxious weeds.
2. Review, evaluate and report the results of "A"-rated noxious weed eradication activities.
3. Supply, as available, biological control agents to suppress noxious weeds.
4. Act as a public education resource on noxious weeds.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

1. Although the California Department of Forestry, Fresno, Kings Ranger Unit, is not funded to provide any assistance to this program. The Fresno Kings Ranger Unit agrees to provide on a case by case basis the following help:
 - a. Help distribute noxious weed pamphlets within a defined area of Eastern Fresno county as part of CDF's public education program.
 - b. Assist with fire crews for the experimental burning of known noxious weeds areas on private property and joint USFS, BLM property for the purpose of controlling the spread of the noxious weeds.
 - c. Develop a plan for CDF contracted "fire" equipment, Fresno Kings Ranger Unit to have equipment washed (Safe Area) to prevent weed spread.

California Department of Transportation, Districts 6 and 10

1. Provide encroachment permit for no fee to allow for removal or control of noxious weeds along state highway right of ways
2. Coordinate with County Agricultural Commissioner's office on herbicide and bio-control projects
3. Participate within the state highway right of way boundaries to control noxious weeds
4. Encourage active participation by the public in the "adopt a highway" program by allowing groups to volunteer to keep certain segments of state highways weed-free

California Native Plant Society, Sequoia Chapter

1. To educate Sequoia Chapter members on impacts of noxious weeds on native plants and about solutions to the problem
2. To provide volunteers to help with cooperative weed control efforts
3. To encourage Sequoia Chapter members to "adopt" a weed patch or an area to patrol for weeds.
4. To contribute financially to the publication of a color brochure on noxious weeds of Fresno, Madera, and Mariposa counties

Coarsegold Resource Conservation District

1. Hold four field workshops per year for landowners which include a section on noxious weeds.
2. Contribute financial support for the South-Central Sierra Noxious Weed Alliance.
3. Contribute towards a photo brochure of non-native noxious invasive weed for identification and control measures.
4. Promote cost-effective science-based control of invasive weeds on public and private lands.
5. Promote Integrated Vegetation Management Programs where weeds create a negative impact on the social, cultural, economic, or natural resources of the region.

Fresno County Department of Food & Agriculture

1. To release bio-control agents and manage their distribution throughout Fresno County
2. Identify noxious weed infestations on County property
3. Address public concerns about noxious weed infestations
4. Perform noxious weed control along County right-of-ways and roadsides

5. Survey high hazard entryways for noxious weeds
6. Monitor seed shipments for the presence of noxious weed seeds
7. Perform weed eradication projects for "A-rated" noxious weeds

Madera County Dept. Food & Agriculture

(As time and personnel allow)

1. Release and manage biocontrol agents and redistribute them within the county
2. Monitor seed shipments coming into Madera County from out of state for noxious weed seeds
3. Survey high hazard entryways for noxious weeds
4. In conjunction with CDFA perform eradication projects on A-rated noxious weeds
5. Address public concerns about noxious weeds

Mariposa County Resource Conservation District

1. To provide financial support to the ongoing effort in Mariposa County. this effort involves the RCD, Agricultural Commissioner, Farm Advisor, and NRCS, and includes the purchase of various equipment to monitor and map the locations of noxious weeds throughout the county.
2. To continue and expand upon the educational efforts to inform the public of the existence and threat of noxious weeds. This includes, but is not limited to, workshops, mailouts, distribution of informational materials, county fairbooth, etc.

Sierra Resource Conservation District

1. Hold field workshops as necessary for private landowners on noxious weed control.
2. Work to support Weed Alliance goals through soliciting financial grants or other funds to assist landowners in eradicating noxious weeds
3. Contribute to a photo brochure of noxious weeds for identification and control measures
4. Promote cost-effective science-based control measures for invasive weeds on public and private lands
5. Promote Integrated Vegetation Management Programs where noxious weeds create a negative impact on the social, cultural, economic, or natural resources of the region.

Southern California Edison Company, Shaver Lake Forestry Department

1. To educate Edison employees and resource users about noxious weeds and the negative impacts these plants can have on native plant communities
2. Identify and map areas with noxious weed populations on Edison lands and apply to GIS map coverages
3. Adopt a proactive attitude for control and eradication
4. Coordinate control measures with adjacent landowners
5. Continued cooperation with the South/Central Sierra Noxious Weed Alliance

University of California Cooperative Extension - Farm Advisor, Mariposa County, and IPM Weed Ecologist, Central Valley

1. Assist in development of educational materials and conduct educational workshops
2. Develop detection and monitoring techniques
3. Facilitate communication among Weed Alliance participants.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

1. Assist in securing funds through established U.S. Department of Agriculture and Resource Conservation District programs to control noxious weed infestations.
2. Support and participate in the identification, eradication, treatment and monitoring of noxious weed populations.
3. Assist in noxious weed public education efforts.
4. Work with private landowners to identify and control existing populations of noxious weeds on their property through existing programs and technical assistance.
5. Supply technical assistance to the Alliance and other interested parties about noxious weed eradication.

USDA Sierra National Forest

1. To identify all noxious weed infestations on Sierra National Forest land
2. To keep an updated Geographic Information System layer of these infestations
3. To undertake control and eradication efforts of top priority noxious weeds
4. To carry out a strong prevention program, using education and when authorized, requiring measures of permittees and Forest users that prevent the spread of noxious weeds onto and away from Forest Service lands.
5. To educate the public and Forest Service employees and permittees about noxious weeds

USDI Bureau of Land Management, Bakersfield Field Office and Folsom Field Office

1. To identify all noxious weed infestations on Bureau of Land Management Land
2. To undertake control and eradication efforts of top priority noxious weeds as well as small, isolated occurrences of other noxious weeds
3. Develop and maintain a Geographic Information System layer of weed infestations
4. To educate the public about noxious weeds

USDI National Park Service - Yosemite National Park

1. Establish a Government Performance and Results Act goal directed toward managing exotic plant populations.
2. Inventory exotic species, prepare eradication or control plans for priority species and implement those plans within the developed areas of the Merced corridor, including the following tasks:
 - a. Develop an understanding of the extent of exotic plant invasion within the El Portal Administrative Site.
 - b. Understand habitat constraints and dispersal patterns of exotics in these areas.
 - c. Implement eradication or control measures for priority species.
 - d. Ensure that there are minimum impacts to natural and cultural resources from exotic species control measures.

USGS Biological Resources Division - Western Ecological Research Center

1. Identify all noxious weed infestations in developed areas, road corridors, front-country trailsides, and other target areas of the Sierra Nevada National Parks.
2. Develop a GIS database of noxious weed locations
3. Search scientific and other published literature for life history characteristics and control methods for exotic species found in the parks and summarize results and citations in a database.
4. Make information on noxious weed presence, location, biology, and control techniques available to resource managers, adjacent land owners and other state and federal agencies upon request.
5. Use information on distribution, biology, invasiveness and controllability of exotic plants in Sierra Nevada National Parks to rank species for management priority.

IV. IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED UPON AND UNDERSTOOD BY AND BETWEEN THE PARTIES THAT:

1. This MOU allows but does not obligate the parties to this agreement to expend money by entering into cooperative agreements. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures including those of the Federal Acquisitions Regulations.
2. This MOU may be revised as necessary, by mutual consent of the parties, by issuance of a written amendment signed and dated by all parties.
3. This MOU in no way restricts any party from participating in similar agreements and/or activities with other public or private entities.
4. Any party may terminate their participation in this MOU at any time by providing written notice to all other parties.
5. New parties may be added to this MOU by their submitting a signature sheet for this MOU.
6. All books, papers, or documents related to this MOU shall be available for examination by officials having oversight authority in any of the organizations signing this MOU.
7. The parties will meet annually for the express purpose of reviewing the effectiveness of the activities pursued under this MOU, and to develop an annual workplan of specific cooperative activities for the coming year. Topics to be covered will include but not be limited to:
 - Developing opportunities for public education
 - Using a common or complementary inventory process and form
 - Sharing information on emerging issues pertaining to noxious weeds
 - Working closely with California Interagency Noxious Weed Coordinating Committee
8. No member of or delegate to Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this instrument, or any benefits that may arise therefrom.
9. This MOU is executed as of the date of the second signature page. Unless terminated by written notice, this MOU shall remain in force until December 31, 2003, at which time it will be subject to renewal or expiration.

See attached pages for signatures of member entities.